

In The Claims:

Please amend Claims 1-11, and 13-16 as follows:

25 1. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush, wherein ~~the~~ tufting holes formed in ~~the~~ a tufting part are [almost elliptic] or [almost rectangular] and the tufting holes are inclined, in directions perpendicular to lengthwise directions of the handle length, toward ~~the~~ a tufting surface so as to have tufts implanted therein support one another.

2. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ a lengthwise direction of the tufting holes is along the direction of handle length.

3. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 ~~or Claim 2~~, wherein there is at least one group of tufting holes that form a pair inclined to ~~the~~ an inside.

4. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 ~~or Claim 2~~, wherein inclination ~~in~~ from a vertical direction of inclined tufting holes is 2 to 10°.

5. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 ~~or Claim 2~~, ~~where the~~ wherein monofilaments that form ~~the~~ tufts to be implanted in the tufting holes have a rectangular cross section, ~~the~~ a direction of ~~the~~ a long side of this cross section being along the lengthwise direction of the tufting holes.

6. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 ~~or~~

09/674,931

~~Claim 2~~, wherein there ~~is~~ are a plurality of converging blocks of a pair of 2 two tufts facing and supporting one another.

7. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 ~~or~~ ~~Claim 2~~, wherein ~~the~~ an end portion of each tuft that has been implanted is worked into a V-shape.

8. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 6, wherein converging blocks are at least at ~~the~~ a front or ~~the~~ a back in the lengthwise direction of ~~the~~ a tufting base.

9. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 6, wherein ~~the~~ a next row of converging blocks is positioned behind ~~the~~ a space that is formed between converging blocks in ~~the~~ a front row in the direction of handle length.

10. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to ~~Claim 1 or~~ ~~Claim 2~~ any one of Claims 1 through 9, wherein an anchor that is driven into ~~the~~ a tufting base in ~~the~~ a folded part of a tuft that has been folded in ~~the~~ a center in its lengthwise direction is driven into the tufting hole so that it is almost parallel to ~~the~~ a long side or ~~the~~ a short side of the tufting hole and ~~the~~ an opening surface area of the tufting hole is divided into two equal parts in order to embed and support ~~the~~ said tufts in the tufting hole.

11. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim ~~1 or~~ ~~Claim 2~~ 10, wherein ~~the~~ said anchor is positioned ± 10° with

09/674,931

respect to ~~the~~ a center line along ~~the~~ a lengthwise direction of ~~the~~ said tufting hole.

12. (Original) A toothbrush according to Claim 11, wherein the centers of the tufting holes are not lined up on one straight line in the direction of handle length.


6
Q 13. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to ~~Claim 1 or Claim 2~~ any one of the Claims 1 through 9 wherein tufting holes account for 10 to 30 mm in ~~the~~ a direction of handle length and 5 to 15 mm in ~~the~~ a direction of handle width.

14. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to any ~~±~~ one of Claims 1 through ~~13~~ 9, wherein the tufting holes are almost rectangular and ~~the~~ a short side of these almost rectangular tufting holes has dimensions of 0.8 to 2.0 mm, while ~~the~~ a long side has dimensions of 1.5 to 5.0 mm.

15. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to ~~Claim 2~~ any one of Claims 2 through 9, ~~where the~~ wherein a distance at ~~the~~ a base between the tufts that form a pair and make up ~~the~~ converging blocks is 0.2 to 4.0 mm.

16. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to ~~Claim 6~~ any one of Claims 6 through 9, wherein there are 5 five rows of tufts in the lengthwise direction of the tufting base, with ~~Rows 1~~ rows one and 5 five forming one converging block in ~~the~~ a center in ~~the~~ a direction of width of ~~the~~ a tufting base, ~~Rows 2~~ rows two and 4

09/674,931

 four forming 2 two converging blocks on either side sandwiching the center in the direction of width of the tufting base, and ~~Row 3~~ row three forming one converging block at the center in the direction of width of the converging block, and there is 1 one independent tuft, each inclined so that it is in the same direction as the tufts that form ~~the~~ said converging blocks, but its end portion does not touch the converging blocks, to ~~the~~ an outside of ~~the~~ said converging blocks.
